



# Using Literature Circles-based Program for Developing EFL Creative Short Story Writing Skills among Secondary Stage Students

*By*

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**ABSTRACT**

The present study investigated the effectiveness of using literature circles based program on developing secondary school students' EFL creativeshort story writing skills. A pre-post experimental one group design was used. First year secondary school students at El-Shomout El-Moshtaraka Secondary School, Benha, Qalioubiya Governorate, Egypt (N=33) during the first term of the school year 2020-2021 participated in the study. An EFL creative short story writing skills checklist was developed and validated. Instruments were an EFL creative short story writing skills pre-post test and a scoring rubric. The EFL creative short story writing skills pre-test was applied to the participants. Then they were taught through literature circles-based program for developing their creative short story writing skills. The researcher applied the post-test to the participants to assess the effectiveness of the literature circles based program. The study results were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Results of the study revealed that the first year secondary stage students' EFL creative short story writing skills were significantly developed as a result of the use of literature circles-based program.

**Key words:** Literature Circles, EFL Creative Short Story Writing Skills, Secondary Stage.

## إستخدام برنامج قائم على دوائر الأدب لتنمية مهارات الكتابة الإبداعية لل قصة القصيرة في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طلاب المرحلة الثانوية

### المخلص

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقق من مدى فاعلية إستخدام برنامج قائم على دوائر الأدب لتنمية مهارات الكتابة الإبداعية للقصة القصيرة في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طلاب المرحلة الثانوية. إستخدمت الباحثة التصميم التجريبي للقياس القبلى- بعدى مجموعة تجريبية. تكونت عينة الدراسة من ثلاثة وثلاثين طالباً و طالبة تم اختيارهم من طلاب مدرسة الشموث الثانوية المشتركة ، محافظة القليوبية بجمهورية مصر العربية فى الفصل الدراسى الأول للعام الدراسى ٢٠٢٠-٢٠٢١ م. تم تحديد المهارات اللازمة لطلاب الصف الأول الثانوي من خلال إعداد قائمة بالمهارات وإختبارهم قبلها من خلال إعداد إختبار بلى- بعدى فى الكتابة الإبداعية للقصة القصيرة فى اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. قامت الباحثة بتدريس الطلاب من خلال جلسات البرنامج القائم على دوائر لأدب لتنمية مهارات الكتابة الإبداعية للقصة القصيرة فى اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. قامت الباحثة بتطبيق أدوات البحث بعديا علي عينة الدراسة. كما تم تحليل نتائج الدراسة كميا وكيفيا. وقد أسفرت نتائج الدراسة إلى نمية مهارات الكتابة الإبداعية للقصة القصيرة فى اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طلاب الصف الأول الثانوي نتيجة إستخدام البرنامج القائم على دوائر الأدب.

### الكلمات المفتاحية:

دوائر الأدب- الكتابة الإبداعية للقصة القصيرة فى اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية-  
المرحلة الثانوية.

## **Introduction**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century requires that graduate students produce scholarly writing that is acceptable to their disciplinary communities as well as global audiences in need of specialized knowledge. The expression of emotions, thoughts, wishes and plans in written form refers to writing. It is an essential skill for students in the secondary stage as it is the skill through which the students could express their thoughts. It is the main skill through which students could be evaluated in different academic and educational contexts.

There are numerous purposes involved in writing. Writing can be formal such as writing business letters or creative such as in writing poetry and prose (Marlow, 1994). Creative writing can be viewed as the fiction writing or the fictional autobiography for remedial purposes in order to raise self insight. The creative process is intrinsically self-developmental in the creation of artwork (Bolton, 1994). It involves searching for meaning, seeking for wonder and discovery, and for personal involvement (Stegner, 2002).

Creativity is not the production of something entirely new; rather it is a result of new arrangements of previously familiar structures. Thus, creative writing is the reconfiguration of patterns that subjects have encountered in literature (Urlaub, 2011). Creativity can be particularly seen and evaluated concretely in writing skills. Writing skills should be continuously exercised and improved so that creativity can be unearthed and developed. For this purpose, students should be encouraged to conduct creative writing activities, this is believed to enhance students' perception of the outer world and enable them to bring originality to their perceptions (Onkas, 2015).

The term "creative writing" in literature usually refers to writing of stories, poems and plays. The word "creative" is seen as doing something new, either new in idea and what it is saying or new in its writing technique or both. Thus, this sometimes means that creativity is often seen as a feature of literature (Muthusamy, Mohamd, Ghazali & Michael, 2010). Lengelle, Meijers, Poell and Post (2013) added that creative writing contributes to career development and helps learners to narrate their novels and stories.

Creative writing as a writing methodology is characterized by the free expression of thoughts and ideas in a supportive and constructive classroom environment. It is also referred to as expressive writing. This approach focuses on enhancing students' ability to express their

creativity and genuinely practice writing in an anxiety-free atmosphere-technique. It demonstrates the characteristics of creative writing which include: writing a paragraph by describing a person or a place; writing a short story; writing an informal letter to a friend or a report about something the reader has read; writing about a given topic; and writing by describing a picture. Moreover, there have also been discussions about creative writing as a way of fostering critical thinking (Toci, 2014).

Literature circles strategy is related to literature-based instruction, where learners are divided into small groups to discuss the literary text guided by their own personal responses on what they have read (Scott, 1994 & Spiegal, 1998). According to Fredricks (2012), literature circles enable students to engage with literature in a way that facilitates critical thinking while providing a meaningful literacy experiences.

Literature circles is based on Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In this strategy, difficult reading texts are discussed with peers and the students in order to make meaning. Both the teacher and students handle the literary texts collectively to connect them with their own. In addition, the teacher can support the difficult aspects of reading texts for many students to understand (Maher, 2013). In literature circles, the students take responsibility from the teacher to the students. The students become responsible for their learning process. This shift of responsibility leads to students' confidence, leadership, and independence (Jacobs, 2015).

The social interaction that takes place in a literature circle is a key component of its success. To be able to verbalize the content, to listen to other modes of thinking, and to hear other perspectives all contribute to deepening comprehension (Burns, 1998). Literature circles allow students to cooperatively learn and comprehend texts through casual conversations amongst their peers as well as immersion in discussions surrounding purposefully chosen questions that will aid in text comprehension (Coccia, 2015).

### **Context of the Problem**

Despite the importance of EFL creative writing skills, first year secondary school students' level is low in EFL creative writing skills. This low level was revealed in a number of Egyptian studies such as Mohammed, Abd-Alhack, Okasha (2011); Kaoud (2015); Abdel Barry (2016); Ebrahim (2016); Zidan (2016); Abdel Barry, Edrees, El-

Maghraby and El-Masrsafy (2017); Hassan, Edris and Amer (2018); El-Mahdy (2018); Qoura, El Hadidy and El-Mahdy (2018); Mohammed, Abd-Alaziz and El-Banna (2018); Al Morshidy (2020) and Farag (2020).

Khater (2015) stated that "In spite of the fact that creativity should be an integral part of our curricula in such a global era that demands creative individuals to cope with the rapid development in every field, it is found, unfortunately, that creative writing in EFL is practically unknown and unused in EFL teaching in the Egyptian educational system" (p.329).

In order to be fully sure of the problem under investigation, the researcher conducted a pilot study on a sample of 30 students from first year secondary school students at El-Shomout Secondary School, Al-Qulyoubia Governorate during the second term of the school year 2017-2018. The pilot study included a creative writing skills test prepared by the researcher. A creative writing rubric adopted from Ebrahim (2016) was used for scoring the EFL creative writing test. Results indicated that the average of the students' scores was (8.47) out of a total 16 with percentage (52.9) %. The results assured the low level of EFL creative writing skills among the first year secondary school students.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the EFL creative writing skills' importance, first year secondary students seem not to possess its basic skills. So, this study was an attempt to use literature circles-based program to develop their EFL creative writing skills.

### **Questions of the Study**

To search this problem scientifically, the present study attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the EFL creative short story writing skills required for first year secondary school students?
- 2) What is a literature circles-based program for developing EFL creative short story writing skills?
- 3) What is the effectiveness of the literature circles-based program for developing some EFL creative short story writing skills among first year secondary school students?

### **Review of Literature**

#### **EFL Creative Writing**

There are many definitions of creative writing. It was defined as work in the traditional literary genres of poetry, short fiction, the novel,

the play, and/or the literary essay (Stewart, 1994:7). To Harmer (2001) creative writing suggests imaginative tasks such as writing poetry, stories and play. As defined by May (2007:1) 'creative writing' means writing fiction, poetry and script and writing narrative non-fiction and writing the feature side of journalism. Creative writing can be also defined as the study of writing (including poetry, fiction, drama, and creative non-fiction) and its contexts through creative production and reflection on process. Creative writing uses any form of writing as an exemplary subject of study. The creative writing is not informational, but it includes imaginative interpretations of the world which encourages the reader's participation (Bennett, Clarke, Motion&Naidoo, 2008as cited in Pawliczak, 2015, 2).

Creative writing skills means writing fiction pieces namely; story, short story, biography and autobiography aiming at developing the skills of plot, characterization, style and word choice, setting and dialogue; as well as writing nonfiction pieces namely; memoire, sketch, personal narrative with the aim of developing the skills of narrative, content, reflection and critical thinking and language (Khater, 2015).Consequently, creative writing tends to increase ESL/EFL students' ability to express their feelings in a vivid and spontaneous manner, and to convey responses freely in their writing.

### **Characteristics and Importance of Creative Writing**

Riabokrys and Mishchenkob (2016) enumerated the following characteristics of creative writing:

- It creates a pleasant and supportive atmosphere and promotes the development of group cohesiveness.
- It increases the students' expectation of success in particular tasks and in learning in general.
- It increases the students' expectation of success in particular tasks and in learning in general.
- It makes learning more stimulating and enjoyable by breaking the monotony of classroom events making learning stimulating and enjoyable by increasing the attractiveness of tasks and by employing students as active task participants.
- It presents and administers tasks in a motivating way and provides students with regular experiences of success.



- It builds students' confidence by providing regular encouragement and increases student motivation by promoting cooperation among the students and by actively promoting student autonomy.
- It increases student satisfaction and offers rewards in a motivating manner.

According to Kirkgöz (2014), there are several reasons for including creative writing in the language teaching practices. First, creative writing helps language development at the level of grammar, vocabulary and discourse. Second, creative writing encourages more creative reading and aesthetic reading skills development, which enhances the students' understanding of textual construction and contributes to their writing. In addition, creative writing concentrates on the right side of the brain, which focuses on feelings, physical sensations, intuition and the like. This leads to a balance between the logical and the intuitive thinking. It also gives an opportunity for students whose hemisphere dominance may not be left-brain where they can engage in more logical thinking.

Norman and Spencer (2005) mentioned that creative writing helps learners to express their ideas, engage in the creative process, and reflect on their lives. Randolph (2011) stated that using creative writing is both helpful and more natural because when teacher asks students to write on familiar topics based on their own memories and experiences, they can write them in a more comfortable and familiar way.

Maley (2012) indicated the salient differences between the expository writing and creative writing in Table (1):

**Table (1): The principle differences between the expository writing and creative writing**

<b>Expository writing</b>	<b>Creative writing</b>
Instrumental	Aesthetic
Facts	Imagination
External control	Internal discipline
Conventions	Stretching rules
Logical	Intuitive
Analytical	Associative
Impersonal	Personal
Thinking mode	Feeling mode (plus thinking)
Appeal to the intellect	Appeal to the senses
Avoidance of ambiguity	Creation of multiple meanings

(Adopted from Maley, 2012:2)

## Literature Circles Strategy

In 1994, Daniels developed literature circles (LCs). It can be defined as a reading strategy where students read the literary texts that link and expand concepts, by which they can be more engaged in reading and be more motivated as well as get a rich vocabulary environment; share their personal responses in small group discussion; and then share the responses with the whole class (Irawati&Samarinda, 2016). Daniels (1994) as cited in Varita (2017) has stated that literature circles are small, peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article or book. While they are reading, each member of the group is assigned a portion of the text to study (either in or outside of the class), members make notes to help them contribute to the upcoming discussions and each member comes to the group with ideas to share.

There are many theories supporting the literature circles. Hsu (2004:3-6) presented the theories that support the literature circles including reading as a process, collaborative learning, Rosenblatt's reader-response theory, reading-writing connection, and independent learning.

**Reading as a Process:** reading is considered a process in small groups; three other key elements assert such success: natural talks, personalization of, and internalization of learning.

**Collaborative learning:** This theory promotes the small, social group action composed of students with varying abilities; Vygotsky's (1978) "zone of proximal development" is the most quoted theory.

**Rosenblatt's Reader-response Theory:** According this theory, students are individually responsible for what they make of the literary texts because the student interpretation of the literary texts derives from his response through the literary texts, not around it.

**Reading-Writing Connection:** Integrating reading and writing is embedded in the literature circles strategy. Students write their discussion questions based on what they read by playing the different roles of discussion director and they interpret reading in various ways and share with peers by writing reading logs and literary letters. Moreover, the various activities held during the literature circles session also emphasize the reading-writing connection.

***Independent Learning:*** Self-generated, problem-solving principle concentrates on literature circles as well. Unlike the traditional teacher-centered classroom where teachers play dominating instructors, throwing questions at students, in literature circles, students generate their own questions for discussion.

According to Dugan (1997) and Taylor (2001), literature circles are based on three areas of theory and research: The first is the transactional theory of literary reading. Literature circles draws on the significance of both afferent and efferent reading transactions in the formation of literacy. The afferent stance involves the aesthetic, personal reactions that a reader has with a text, and the efferent stance relates to what information is carried away after reading. The transactional theory is also known as reader response theory (Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978), as readers actively construct meaning through responses to a particular text and then reflect upon their responses. The second is social interaction and dialogue with others (Vygotskey, 1986). Finally, literature circles builds on evidence suggesting that reading and writing are reciprocal processes (Tierney & Pearson, 1983).

Clower (2006, 25-27) identified the types of literature circles to include: (a) basic literature circles, (b) modified literature circles, (c) literature circles with roles, (d) nonfiction literature circles, and (e) structured literature circles. The present study is concerned with literature circles with roles.

According to Brown (2002), when introducing literature circles, students may assume the following:

1. Literary Luminary role: In this role, the student points out interesting or important passages within the reading.
2. Illustrator role: In this role, the student uses some form of artwork to represent a significant scene or idea from the reading.
3. Discussion Director role: In this role, the student writes questions that lead to discussion by the group.
4. Connector role: In this role, the student finds connections between the reading material and something outside the text, such as a personal experience, a topic studied in another class, or a different literary work.
5. Vocabulary Builder role: In this role, the student discusses words in the text that are unusual, interesting, or difficult to understand.

Day (2003) identified these steps in implementing literature circles:

- 1- The teacher presents the texts in a 'book talk'. The teacher forms groups.
- 2- Each member in the group is allocated a role.
- 3- Students complete their reading individually and prepare for their literature-circle discussion.
- 4- Discussion takes place within the literature circle .
- 5- Steps 3 and 4 are repeated until the text reading is complete .
- 6- The group, individual group members and the teacher evaluate learning progress.

According to Levy (2011), the literature circle discussion supports reading as a drafting process similar to the drafting process in writing. The task sheets offer students a plan, activating prior knowledge and narrowing goals into specific tasks as they interact personally with the text. Student responses on task sheets are first read of the text, similar to a first draft of an essay. In the circle discussions, students have to collectively construct knowledge for an audience of their peers and, as a result, their acts of reading move beyond the space where texts are vessels from which students extract, spew, and promptly forget information and become acts of dynamic composition.

The various roles that students act out in literature circles help them to make predictions, construct visual images, create connections to personal experiences and other texts, monitor their reading and whether it makes sense, solve word and text-level problems in flexible ways, summarize what they read, argue with the author, and evaluate the reading content and the used writing style (Blum, Lipsett&Yocom, 2002). In literature circles, the students use group roles as a strategy. In each group, a student is designated as the vocabulary enhancer, summarizer, connector, researcher, or the questioner. Regardless of the role, all are equally important to support comprehension. Through collaboration, each role is used as a strategy to form discussions about the text. When group members do not understand a word or particular part in the story, their peers quickly respond to assist them (Jacobs: 2015).

Stein and Beed (2004) identified four roles that teachers play within literature circles. These are: facilitator, participant, mediator, and active listener. The facilitator role involves the teachers encouraging students' interaction and talk and to monitor social interactions that interfere with the discussion. The second role views the teacher as a participant. This involves teachers interacting as readers by sharing personal connections, opinions, and questions that arouse from their personal understanding of the literary text. The third role identifies the teacher as a mediator. This role involves teachers using the facilitator or the participant talk to encourage students to connect their discussions about the literary text to their own life experiences and values. The final role is active listener. This role moves away from teacher dominated discussions and leaves the control up to group discussion.

Given the importance of creative writing and the problem of lack of EFL creative writing skills, some researchers conducted a number of studies for investigating strategies and approaches that help students develop their creative writing skills. Hassan, Edris and Amer's study (2018) aimed at enhancing EFL second year secondary stage students' EFL creative writing skills through problem-based learning program. The participants included 60 students. The study instruments were an EFL creative writing skills questionnaire and EFL creative writing test. Results indicated the effectiveness of problem-based learning program in developing EFL creative writing skills among second year secondary stage students.

Qoura, El Hadidy and El-Mahdy (2018) investigated the effect of a program based on short stories to develop EFL secondary school students' creative writing skills (fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration). The participants of the study consisted of 60 girls divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group from first year secondary school students of Sinbellawein Secondary School for Girls. Two instruments were constructed; a questionnaire of creative writing skills to determine the most important creative writing skills for first year secondary school students and a creative writing pre-post test. The results indicated that the use of short story enhanced the creative writing skills of first year secondary school students.

Mohammed, Abd-Alaziz and El-Banna (2018) investigated the effect of using an e-learning environment for enhancing creative writing skills among secondary school EFL students. Participants were 60 first year secondary school students from Barout Secondary School for boys,

Beni-Suef Governorate. The participants were divided into a control group (N=30) and an experimental group (N=30). Instruments of the study included: a creative writing skills checklist and a creative writing pre-posttest. The results indicated that the e-learning based instructional course brought about significant results in enhancing EFL creative writing sub-skills first year secondary school students.

Al Morshidy (2020) investigated the effectiveness of using the Humanistic Approach to develop EFL creative writing skills (accuracy, fluency, flexibility, and originality) of secondary school students. Participants were 64 students from first year secondary stage students at Islam Mohammed Negm Secondary School for Boys and Girls who were assigned into two groups: an experimental group (N=32) and a control group (N=32). An EFL creative writing skills checklist and creative writing skills pre-post test and a scoring rubric were used. Results revealed that teaching through the Humanistic Approach developed the students' EFL creative writing skills.

Farag (2020) aimed at developing EFL creative writing skills (accuracy, fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration) via using the imaginative approach. Participants were 56 students enrolled in the first year secondary stage, Experimental Language School. Instruments were two equivalent versions of the EFL creative writing skills test to be used as a pre-post test and a scoring rubric. Results revealed that using the imaginative approach was effective in developing EFL first year secondary school students' creative writing skills.

### **Literature Circles and Writing**

In the literature circles, reading interactions affects positively writing skills in general; they also support greater participation and involvement as students share and shape their opinions on paper. Teachers can assign engaging and challenging group-writing activities that develop students' critical thinking, such as choosing a different ending to a short story, writing a short critique, or addressing writing prompts that reflect knowledge of what they have read (Webb, Nemer, Chizhik & Sugrue, 1998). Literature circles allow for numerous extension activities such as: "writing a song about your book, designing a map of the setting of your book, making puppets and writing a script from the scene you choose, creating a story banner about an important aspect from your book, advertising the book, writing a new ending, and reporting an interview with a character (Hsu, 2004).

Daniels (2006) showed that using written conversations in the class helps students write notes to each other about the reading, passing them back and forth in the class. They can also write letters to each other to be answered. Consequently, Dimitriou (2007) stated that through group discussion of L2 texts, students' groups were able to generate topics for discussion and writing assignments. Kozak (2008) also mentioned that literature circles allow for meaningful writing to take place along with the reading as they combine reading and writing to complete a goal. The role sheets encourage students to write about a text in relation to the role they must perform as a member of their group.

On the other hand, given the importance of the literature circles strategy in developing EFL creative writing skills, some researchers were interested in investigating the strategy. This concern exhibited itself in conducting a number of studies to investigate the effectiveness of the literature circles strategy in developing EFL creative writing skills such as Eldoda (2016); Seleim, Badawi and Abdel Fattah, (2020) and Helmy (2020). Eldoda (2016) investigated the effect of using literature circles strategy on developing some EFL creative writing skills among secondary school students. Participants were 60 students of first year secondary at Al-Sadat secondary school in Meet Abu- Elkoom- Tala-Menoufiya Governorate. They were divided into two equivalent groups: control and experimental. Results indicated that literature circles strategy was effective in developing creative writing skills among secondary school students.

Seleim, Badawi and Abdel Fattah (2020) investigated the effect of literature circles on developing EFL creative writing for secondary stage students. A pre-post experimental one group design was used. The participants were 40 first year secondary stage students. A creative writing pre/post test was used to measure the students' performance in creative writing. Results indicated the effectiveness of the literature circles strategy in developing EFL creative writing among secondary stage students.

Helmy (2020) investigated the effect of a program based on literature circles on developing creative writing skills and motivation for writing of EFL student-teachers at Women's College, Ain Shams University. The study adopted the one-group research design. Two instruments were used: a pre-post creative writing test and a writing motivation scale. Participants were a sample of 35 fourth year student-

teachers of English at Women's College. The results of the study have shown that the proposed literature circles program was effective in developing the participants' creative fiction writing skills, namely; plot, characterization, dialogue, setting and language style and non-fiction skills which are; narrative, organization, voice and language use. The program also proved to be effective in increasing writing motivation of EFL prospective teachers

### **Method**

#### **Participants of the Study**

The present study participants were one intact class, (N=33) of first year secondary school students at El-Shomout El-Moshtaraka Secondary School, Benha, Qalioubiya Governorate, Egypt during the first term of the school year 2020/2021.

#### **Research Design**

The present study followed a pre-test/post-test experimental one group design.

#### **Instruments and Materials of the Study**

The following instruments have been developed:

- (1) An EFL creative short story writing skills checklist to identify the required creative short story writing skills for first year secondary school students.
- (2) An EFL creative short story writing skills pre-post test.
- (3) A rubric for scoring the EFL creative short story writing skills test.
- (4) A literature circles-based program.

#### **The EFL Creative Short Story Writing Skills Checklist**

The checklist of EFL creative short story writing skills was prepared to identify the EFL creative short story writing skills required for first year secondary school students, then setting these skills in their final version in an EFL creative short story writing checklist.

The EFL creative short story writing checklist formed the basis for:

- Determining the EFL creative short story writing skills required for first year secondary school students.
- Preparing a creative short story writing pre-post test.
- Designing a program for implementing a literature circle based program.

To determine the EFL creative short story writing skills suitable for first year secondary school students, the present study researcher reviewed:



1. Ministry of Education (2020-2021) Directives for general secondary school teachers.
2. Ministry of Education (2020-2021) Teacher's guide for "Hello: English for secondary school year one.
3. Ministry of Education (2020-2021) Students' book "Hello: English for secondary school year one.
4. The literature related to the area of creative short story writingskills and sub-skills such as Anderson (1989), Lucke (1999), Lee (2005), King (2010), Bell (2011), James (2011), Al-Alami (2019) and El-Sweedy (2019).
5. Some EFL creative writing studies that aimed at developing secondary school students' EFL creative writingskills, such as Abdel Barry (2016), Ebrahim (2016), Eldoda (2016), Hamed, Mohammed and Seleim (2016), Zidan (2016), Abdel Barry, Edrees, El Maghraby and El-Marsafy (2017), El-Mahdy (2018), Hassan, Edris and Amer (2018) and Qoura, El Hadidy and El-Mahdy (2018).

The checklist included 10 items representing the EFL creative short story writingskills distributed through the six dimensions of creative short story writing elements: character, setting, plot, theme, point of view, and style. The sub-skills of each dimension were presented in a checklist for identifying if it is "appropriate" or "not appropriate" by ticking (✓) in the space provided.

For validating the EFL creative short story writing skills checklist, it was submitted to a panel of jury members of specialists of teaching methodology in the field of TEFL (N=10) to determine the suitability of each sub-skill to the creative short story writing dimension in which it is classified and the appropriateness of the skills suggested to first year secondary school students. The jury members agreed on the appropriateness of the components and skills to the 1<sup>st</sup> year secondary school students.

### **The EFL Creative Short Story Writing Skills Pre-Post Test**

The researcher prepared the EFL creative short story writing pre-post test. It was used as a pre and post-test to identify how far first year secondary school students acquired the EFL creative short story writing skills as a result of teaching creative short story writing in English language using a literature circles based program.

The creative short story writing skills test was prepared to measure first year secondary school students' EFL creative short story writing skills classified under six main dimensions: character, setting, plot,

theme, point of view, and style. The creative short story writing test consisted of asking students to write two short stories. In their writing of each story, they were asked to include:

- a. Different types of characterization.
- b. Character's development through dialogue, interactions with others and situations.
- c. The elements of the setting.
- d. Different types of setting.
- e. All elements of the plot.
- f. Different types and techniques of plot.
- g. A clear theme.
- h. A suitable point of view.
- i. Narrative writing techniques, imagery and literary devices such as similes and personification.

For estimating the validity of the EFL creative short story skillstest, It was submitted to a panel of jury members (N=10) of EFL curricula and teaching methods experts who asserted that the test was valid.

#### **Internal Consistency Validity**

The test was piloted to a sample of 30 first year secondary stage students, other than the experimental group, in the first term of the academic year 2020/2021. The researcher used Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) program (version 18) for estimating the internal consistency validity in two methods:

A) Estimating the internal consistency among the different dimensions of the test and each other.

B) Estimating the internal consistency among the test dimensions and the overall mark for the test.

#### **A) Estimating the internal consistency validity among the different dimensions of the test and each other**

To estimate the internal consistency validity among the different dimensions of the test and each other, the correlations between the students' scores in each dimension of the test and their scores in the other dimensions were calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficients. Table (2) indicates these correlations.

**Table (2): The correlations between the scores of each dimension in the creative writing test and the scores of the other dimensions using the Pearson correlation coefficients**

Style	Point of view	Theme	Plot	Setting	Correlation Skills
0.398*	0.649**	0.542**	0.435*	0.467**	Character
0.364*	0.640**	0.665**	0.369*		Setting
0.524**	0.390*	0.804*			Plot
0.505**	0.689**				Theme
0.458*					Point of view
					Style

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level \*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table (2) indicates that all correlations are significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels. This indicates the internal consistency among the different dimensions of the test and each other.

#### **B) Estimating the internal consistency validity among the test dimensions and the overall score of the test**

To estimate the internal consistency validity among the test dimensions and the overall score of the test, the correlations between the students' scores in each dimension of the test and the overall score of the test were calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficients. Table (3) indicates these correlations.

**Table (3): The correlations between the scores of each dimension in the creative writing test and the overall score of the test using the Pearson correlation coefficients**

Style	Point of view	Theme	Plot	Setting	Character	Skills
0.453*	0.746**	0.749**	0.614**	0.586**	0.662**	Correlation

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level \*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table (3) indicates that all correlations are significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels. This indicates the internal consistency validity among the different dimensions of the test and the overall scores.

#### **Discriminant Validity**

The scores of 27 % of the participants who scored the highest and 27 % of those who scored the lowest of the pilot sample (N=30) were calculated using Mann-Whitney Test to estimate the significant differences between these means. Table (4) shows the findings of the differences between the mean rank and Z- value between the two groups.

**Table (4): The findings of the differences between the mean rank and Z- value of the two high scores and low scores of the EFL creative short story writing skills test**

A Sig.	Z- Value	Sum of Ranks	Mean Rank	Group
0.01	3.414	100	12.50	The highest group level students
		36	4.50	The lowest group level students

Table (4) shows that there is statistically significant difference at the level 0.01 between the two groups' levels. Accordingly, the EFL creative short story writing skills test is of high level of discriminant validity.

#### **Reliability of the EFL Creative Short Story skills Test Test-Retest Reliability Method**

In order to establish the reliability of the creative short story writing test, the test was piloted to a sample of first year secondary school students in El-ShomoutEl-Moshtaraka Secondary School in Benha (N=30), other than the study sample, during the first term of the school year 2020-2021. Then, the test was re-administered after two weeks to the same sample. The Pearson correlation coefficients between the results of the first and second application of the test were calculated using SPSS program (Version. 18). The Pearson reliability correlation coefficients between the two applications in each sub-skill and the test as a whole were statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Table (5) indicates the test-retest reliability correlation coefficients of the EFL creative writing skills test.

**Table (5): The test-retest reliability correlation coefficients of the EFL creative writing skills test**

the test as a whole	Style	Point of view	Theme	Plot	Setting	Character	Skills
0.942**	0.737**	0.917**	0.881**	0.851**	0.659**	0.719**	Correlation

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table (5) indicates that all the reliability correlation coefficients are high and are statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Accordingly, the EFL creative short story writing skills test is reliable in each dimension of the test and the test as a whole.

### **Scoring Rubric of the EFL Creative Short Story Writing Test**

An analytical rubric for scoring the EFL creative short story writing skills test was used. The analytical rubric was developed by reviewing the literature related to EFL creative writing such as Griffin and Ana (2005); Morris and Sharpin (2013); Mozaffari (2013); Abdel Razik (2019) and Abdel Razik, Khater, Hussein and Ahmed (2019) and El-Sweedy (2019). The purpose of the analytical rubric was to score the students' responses to the EFL creative short story writing skills test. This rubric included a detailed description of each of the six main elements of the creative short story writing skills test and the 10 sub-skills in order to help in scoring each student's two short stories. The rubric included a scale of four where (4) represents high, (3) represents middle, (2) represents low and (1) represents the lowest.

#### **The Experimental Procedures of the Study**

##### **Procedures of Selecting the Study Sample**

During the first term of the school year 2020-2021, students were selected from El-Shomout El-Moshtaraka secondary school in Benha, Qalyoubia Governorate, Egypt. The present study participants were one intact class that served as the experimental group (N=33) which were taught by the researcher through a literature circles based program.

##### **Pre-testing**

The EFL creative short story writing skills pre-test was applied to the students of the experimental group in December, 2020.

##### **Experimentation**

An EFL creative short story writing skills pre test was applied to the students of the experimental group (pre-test). Then, the experimental group (N=33) was taught using the literature circles-based program. The sessions were divided as follow: The first session was an orientation session about the importance of EFL creative short story writing. Sessions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were instructional sessions in which the literature circles-based program was used as a practice of teaching the elements of short story.

##### **Post-testing**

After finishing teaching using the literature circles based program, the EFL creative short story writing skills test was re-applied to students in the experimental groups (post-test) on January, 2021.

## **The Literature Circles based Program**

### **Objective of the Program**

The objective of the literature circles-based program was intended to develop the 1<sup>st</sup> year secondary school students' EFL creative short story writing

### **The Content used during Program Application**

This study focused on short stories as the learning material. Five short stories were used. The present study used short stories of "The Story of an Hour", "Little Red Riding Hood", "All Summer in a Day", "The Necklace" and "The Gift of the Magi". These short stories were chosen according to their suitability for 1<sup>st</sup> year secondary stage students' linguistic levels and their creative short story writing skills levels.

### **Time Duration of the Program**

Due to The Corona virus, the school administration recommended administering the program in an intensive form since the number of people infected was increasing and plans were prepared for using blended learning. The application of the program included 7 extensive sessions during the first semester of the school year 2020-2021. The time of the orientation session was 60minutes. The following sessions lasted for 120 minutes.

### **The Implementation of the Literature Circles-Based Program**

Before applying the literature circles based program, the researcher prepared Handouts, posters and PowerPoint presentations. She used PowerPoint presentations during the sessions to be more attractive to the students. In addition, in each session, the researcher distributed copies of the attached handouts and the short story used during the session (the teacher distributed short stories before the next session and asked students to read them at home to save time) and presented the short stories via PowerPoint according to the guiding procedures of each session. Moreover, the researcher prepared also copies of literature circles role sheets and copies of work sheets for different activities.

The instructional sessions had gone through the following steps: the teacher assigned a short story text, the teacher made copies of the literature circles role sheets (Summarizer, Discussion Director, Connector, illustrator and Vocabulary enricher), the teacher divided the class into groups of 5 by their choices, each group chose a name, the teacher assigned roles and illustrated the role of each member in the group, the teacher gave each member in the group his/her LC role sheet,

the teacher modeled roles to students, the teacher asked students in each group to read the short story text, discussion prompts and guiding questions were provided to guide learners' reading and stimulate their responses (the literature circles role sheets), students participated in meaningful discussion of their story using the role sheets as a guide for the discussion, and students complete worksheets.

### **Instructional Aids and Materials of the Program**

The following instructional aids and materials were used through program application:

- 1) Short stories texts.
- 2) Whiteboard.
- 3) Notebook/pen or pencil.
- 4) Printed handouts.
- 5) PowerPoint presentations.
- 6) Students' worksheets.

### **Assessment Techniques used through Program Application**

Formative assessment aimed at assessing students' progress in creative short story writing skills and providing them with the required feedback. The formative assessment was done through the sessions (i.e. free writing activities used during literature circles sessions). Summative assessment was conducted after finishing the program implementation sessions. It aimed at identifying whether the objectives of the program had been achieved and investigating the effectiveness of the a literature circles based program in developing first year secondary school students' EFL creative short story writing. Thus, the summative assessment included the post-testing of students using the EFL creative short story writing test.

### **Findings of the Study**

The researcher used Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer software-version 18 to analyze data quantitatively and qualitatively.

### **Findings of the First Hypothesis**

The first main hypothesis in the present study stated that: "There is a statistically significant difference between the pre and post mean scores of the study participants in *the overall EFL creative writing skills* in favor of the post assessment."

For verifying the first hypothesis, Paired-Samples t-test was calculated for the pre and post mean scores of the participants of the study in the overall EFL creative writing skills test. To estimate the effect

size of the experimental treatment in the overall EFL creative writing skills, the Eta square formula ( $\eta^2$ ) was calculated. Table (6) presents the findings of the t-test between the pre assessment and the post assessment of the study participants in the overall EFL creative writing skills test and ( $\eta^2$ ).

**Table (6): The findings of the t-test and ( $\eta^2$ ) between the mean scores of the pre assessment and the post assessment of the study participants in the overall EFL creative writing skills test**

$\eta^2$	$\alpha$ Sig.	DF	t-value	Std. Deviation	Mean	No.	Test	Skills
0.915	0.01	32	18.61	0.97	8.62	33	Pre	Creative writing
				2.36	16.44	33	Post	

Table (6) shows that there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the pre and post mean scores of the study participants in the overall EFL creative writing skills test in favor of the post assessment. Therefore, the first main hypothesis is confirmed. The effect size of the treatment ( $\eta^2$ ) on the overall EFL creative writingskills test is (0.91), which is a high value. The difference can be attributed to the use of literature circles based program. Thus, the first hypothesis was accepted.

The first main hypothesis has six sub-hypotheses dealing with the six dimensions of the EFL creative writing skills. For verifying these sub-hypotheses related to character, setting, plot, theme, point of view, and style dimensions, Paired-Samples t-test was calculated. To estimate the effect size of the experimental treatment in the six dimensions of EFL creative writing, the Eta square formula ( $\eta^2$ ) was calculated. Table (7) presents the findings of the t-test between the pre assessment and the post assessment of the study participants in the six dimensions of EFL creative writing skills and ( $\eta^2$ ).



**Table (7): The findings of the t-test and ( $\eta^2$ ) between the mean scores of the pre assessment and the post assessment of the study participants in the six dimensions of the EFL creative writing skills test**

$\eta^2$	$\alpha$ Sig.	DF	t-value	Std. Deviation	Mean	No.	Test	Skills
0.835	0.01	32	12.73	0.42	1.29	33	Pre	Character
				0.50	2.53	33	Post	
0.894	0.01	32	16.41	0.31	1.12	33	Pre	Setting
				0.52	2.59	33	Post	
0.921	0.01	32	19.33	0.26	1.85	33	Pre	Plot
				0.37	3.17	33	Post	
0.860	0.01	32	14.04	0.56	1.86	33	Pre	Theme
				0.50	3.21	33	Post	
0.909	0.01	32	17.83	0.46	1.46	33	Pre	Point of view
				0.35	2.89	33	Post	
0.633	0.01	32	7.43	0.37	1.11	33	Pre	Style
				0.69	2.05	33	Post	

Table (7) shows that there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the pre and post mean scores of the study participants in the six dimensions of the EFL creative writing skills test in favor of the post assessment. Therefore, all the six sub-hypotheses of the first main hypothesis are accepted. The effect size of the treatment ( $\eta^2$ ) on the six dimensions of EFL creative writing ranged between (0.63 and 0.92), which are high values. The differences can be attributed to the use of literature circles-based program.

### **Findings of the Qualitative Analysis**

In this section, results of qualitative analysis of the participants' performance on the creative short story writing skills are presented in terms of the experimental group students' actual usage of the creative writing dimensions (the character, setting, theme, plot, point of view and style) when answering the EFL creative short story skills test. The qualitative analysis was done through analyzing students' writings before and after the experiment being taught using the literature-based enrichment program supported by examples of students' scripts.

### **Characters**

Concerning the participants' skills related to the characters of the short story before the experiment, the participants did not go in-depth with description. Students did not use direct or indirect characterization techniques as the students did not attempt any development of the character. They introduced the characters by their names only. On the other hand, after the experiment, the students described the different characters using more than two different characterization techniques. Most of the students introduced their characters by their actions, feeling and thoughts. Students developed the characters through different means but more through dialogue and interactions. For example, Yasmeen wrote *"Ali is a good student. He is tall and slim. He is thirteen years old. His friends like him very much because he is brave and honest. He goes to school early in the morning. He wears a school uniform..."* The main character of the short story is Ali. Yasmeen described the character's physical appearance (direct characterization) describing how the character looks like. She wrote *"He wears a school uniform."*, describing how the character is dressed. She wrote *"He is tall and slim"*. She used character traits for example *"good, brave and honest"*. She wrote about the character action *"He goes to school early in the morning"*, describing "What does the character do?". She also used a dialogue. She wrote: *He said "Here is your money"* This describes how the character speaks to the other characters and reveals the personality of Ali's character in the story. She also described how the character speaks and behaves. She wrote: *He said "Let's play in the school yard. They agreed to play together..."*. She also wrote: *He said to himself "I should search for the lost money."* These dialogues reveal the internal dialogue and how the character felt about other characters in the story (The indirect characterization).

### **Setting**

Concerning the participants' skills related to the setting of the short story before the experiment, the students' usage of setting was unclear (the student has difficulty stating when and where the story happened). The students described the setting using few details. Most of the students started with *"Once up a time..."*. In addition, the students did not use sensory details. On the other hand, after the experiment, the students' usage of setting was clear. The students described the setting using many vivid descriptive words to tell when and where the story happened. They used all the five senses details in their writing of the short story. Most of

the time, they used integral setting not a backdrop one. For example, Hossam wrote *"In a sunny day at two o'clock afternoon ..."*, describing when the story took place. He also wrote *"There was an old man, who could not walk. He wanted to cross the road..."* *"At the railway station, while he was waiting for the train to come ..."* describing where the events took place. He also used some sensory details such as *"He heard the sounds of trains"* *"He feels the heat of the sun"*, *He smelt the scent of coffee and freshly baked breads"*, *He saw a beautiful woman, her perfumed scent hanging in the air"*

### **Plot**

Concerning plot of the short story before the experiment, the students presented a confusing sequence of events. The students had difficulty in developing the five elements of plot. The students used one type of plot in different stories and it was not suitable to most elements of the story. They did not use any techniques of plot in different stories. On the other hand, after the experiment, the students included most of the plot elements (Exposition, Conflict: Rising action, Climax and Falling action and Resolution). They presented events that create clear narrative. The students developed the plot without being verbose. They used different types of plots in different stories that are suitable to the all other elements of the story (e.g. Man versus man or human versus nature). They also used different appropriate techniques of plot in different stories (e.g. suspense and foreshadowing). For example, Ehab used all the plot elements. He showed events that create a clear narrative. He wrote *"Maher is a farmer. He is 35 years old. He always wears a galabeya. He always goes to the field everyday in the morning. He plants and waters his field. He feeds his animals. He is helpful and cooperative. He always helps his neighbours in the field... His neighbour Ahmed is 25 years old. He was slim and weak. He wears glasses... He has two buffalos and a cow... (Exposition) One day, afternoon while Ahmed was planting his field, one of his buffalos walked and fell down in the canal... (Rising action) Ahmed went to his neighbour Maher and asked for his help...Maher quickly brings the rope from his cart and asked help from other farmers. He swam in the canal and tied the buffalo and asked the farmers to lift it. They tried many times but they could not lift it (Climax). Suddenly, Maher got an idea. He said" Let's put some stones near the edge of the canal to help the buffalo get out the canal" Maher and the farmers started to put huge stones near the edge of the canal (Falling action) All the farmers pulled the buffalo with the rope and the*

buffalo used these stones to get out the canal (Resolution). Ehab used the struggle which is based on an external force outside one's self (character vs. nature) - Struggle against environment. He also used foreshadowing technique that is suitable to all other elements of the story. He wrote at the beginning of the story "*There was a rope in his cart*". He used a hint or clue to suggest event that will occur later in the story foreshadows a future event in the story that he will use to tie the buffalo to save it.

### **Theme**

Before the experiment, the students used few details to highlight the theme of the story. They wrote a story with no theme. Their stories lacked meaning or purpose. On the other hand, after the experiment, the students used theme very effectively with one or more issues shown. The students use many details that highlighted the theme of the story. Their stories strongly implied or powerfully stated clear and insightful themes. For example, Mohammed wrote "*When the winter came, the leaves had fallen and the grass was dry. The green shopper had nothing to eat. It started to snow and he had no where to go. He thought he would die of hunger and cold. On the other hand, the Ant was enjoying the fruits of his work. He had a nice home and plenty to eat. Then, the grasshopper regretted not working hard when he should have.*" Mohammed used many details to highlight the theme of the story. Based on the previous analysis, the story strongly implies "hard work" which is the insightful theme.

### **Point of View**

Before the experiment, the students wrote a story with no clear narrator. They wrote different stories with no clear point of view. On the other hand, after the experiment, most of the students wrote their stories with a clear narrator, telling their stories from multiple perspectives. Some of students used third person. For example, Mazen wrote the story through third person (Omnishent) point of view as the writer is not a character in the short story, but can see into the minds of all characters and can write what the character say and do. Using the third person omniscient point of view, the reader can discover what all the characters do, think, feel and see. Mazen used third person pronoun *he*. For example, Mazen wrote "*He was walking in the street in a rainy day when he felt hungry. He cried a lot because he did not have enough money to buy food. He looked for a house to ask for food. He went to a nearby house and knocked on the door...*". MennaAllah used first person point of view; she wrote "*My grandpa and I went camping in the mountains...*" "I

had never been more excited to hear those words..." "I could feel my heart pounding..." She wrote from the first point of view because the writer is one of the characters in the short story. She used pronouns like I and my. She presented her thoughts and feelings, but not the thoughts and feeling of other characters.

### Style

Concerning the participants' skills related to the style of the short story before the experiment, the students use of literary devices was limited, their writing lacked sensory language as the meaning was not clear and the characters and expressions were not vivid and rich. On the other hand, after the experiment, most of the students used some narrative techniques and imagery that are appropriate (e.g. varying short and long sentences, appealing to the five senses, withholding details to create suspense). They used many different literary devices such as (imagery, similes and personification) that were appropriate to make meaning clearer and characters and expressions more vivid and rich. For example, Fatma wrote "*The soft white sand warmed my feet as I strolled home after a day at the beach...*" *The sun was a bright yellow disc shining on the blue sea...*" (imagery). She wrote "*The car was as fast as a flash of lightning...*" (simile). She also wrote "*The car happily squealed down the high way...*" (personification). She also used the five senses, withholding details to create suspense. She wrote "*I listened to the voice of the seller of cookies*" "*The scent of cookies was wonderful*" "*The soft white sand warmed my feet*" "*I saw the bright color of the sea water*" "*The sea water was saltiness*"

### Discussion and Interpretation of Results

This part is concerned with the discussion and interpretation of the previously mentioned findings. The results are discussed and interpreted in the light of the study hypotheses.

The present study aimed to develop first year secondary school students' EFL creative writing using the literature circles-based program. The study findings revealed that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the pre-and post assessment of the study participants of EFL creative writing skills in favor of the post-assessment. The study participants showed a great improvement in overall EFL creative short story writing skills in the post test compared to the pre-test. Moreover, all the six sub-skills of the EFL creative writing skills test have been improved. This result might be attributed to different reasons: First, the adoption of authentic literature is thought to

be of great effect on the students' EFL creative writing skills as the study of literature enables students to interact meaningfully with a literary work. It provides students with real authentic language which significantly developed the students' language and skills. This result is consistent with Broekkamp, Janssen and Bergh (2009); Muthusamy, Mohamd, Ghazali and Michael (2010) and Adam and Babiker (2015).

Second, usage of the literature circles-based program during the sessions allowed for meaningful writing to take place along with the reading as the students combined reading and writing to achieve a goal. The role sheets (Summarizer, Discussion Director, Connector, Illustrator and Vocabulary enricher) encouraged students to write about a text in relation to the role they must perform as a member of their group. Through collaboration, each role in the literature circle contributed to form discussions questions about the reading text. If group members did not understand a word or particular part in the short story, their peers helped them and responded to assist them.

Third, the researcher exposed students to a variety of short stories covering the six main dimensions of the EFL creative short story writing skills (character, setting, plot, theme, point of view, and style). The researcher's coverage of these dimensions motivated students to model them in their writings. Fourth, the researcher used discussion prompts and guiding questions during the literature circles sessions to guide students' reading and to stimulate their responses (the literature response role sheets). In addition, the researcher's usage of free writing activities during literature circles sessions helped assess students' progress in the EFL creative short story writing skills and to provide them with the required feedback (self, peer, or teacher feedback).

Fifth, using the literature discussion circles allowed the students to focus their thoughts during the discussion and organize them in a written summary and response as Wiggins (2000) stated. Seventh, literature circles served as launching devices or scaffolds that helped students generate ideas and their own thoughtful conversations about what they have read. This agrees with Brabham and Vallume (2000). In addition, literature circles allowed for meaningful writing to take place along with the reading as they combine reading and writing to complete a goal as Kozak (2008) suggested.

Findings of the present study were consistent with the following previous studies: Eldoda (2016); Seleim, Badawi and Abdel Fattah (2020) and Helmy (2020) who indicated that literature circles had

positive effect on students' creative writing skills. Concerning the EFL creative writing sub skills, the present study findings revealed the improvement of the participants in the six dimensions of the EFL creative writing skills test in favor of the post assessment. Hence, it can be concluded that developing students' EFL creative writing skills might be attributed to using the literature circles-based program.

### **Conclusion**

According to the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data, it can be concluded that the EFL creative short story writing skills were developed as a result of the use of literature circles-based program. This revealed that the literature circles-based program was effective for developing the EFL creative short story writing skills.

### **Recommendations of the Study**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that:

1. The literature circles based program provided in the present study should be adopted by secondary school teachers for teaching EFL creative writing skills in the English language to first year secondary school students.
2. EFL creative short story writing skills: character, setting, plot, theme, point of view and style should be explicitly taught to secondary stage students.
3. Professional development training programs are required to EFL teachers to help them implement the literature circles-based program.
4. Teachers should be trained to how to use literature circles based program in teaching EFL creative writing skills.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

The following areas are suggested for further research:

- 1) Investigating the effect of the literature circles-based program on developing EFL other language skills: listening, speaking and reading among secondary school students.
- 2) Investigating the effect of the literature circles-based program on developing EFL creative short story writing skills among secondary school students using different literary genres such as poetry, novels and plays.
- 3) Examining the effect of using other literature-based strategies on developing secondary school students' EFL creative writing skills.
- 4) Investigating the effectiveness of literature circles-based program on developing EFL critical reading skills among secondary stage students.
- 5) Replication of the study at various educational stages such as primary, preparatory and university.

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